Agenda

The SNP’s official magazine direct to your home

Independence Magazine reflects life in the SNP and the broader national movement

Enjoy our bi-monthly 44-page full-colour magazine, delivered direct

Subscribe today

www.snp.org/magazine
**Agenda**

Saturday 27 April

---

**Session 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10h30</td>
<td>Welcome Address by Michael Russell MSP,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cabinet Secretary for Government Business and Constitutional Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10h40</td>
<td>Report of the Standing Orders and Agenda Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10h45</td>
<td>Constitutional Amendment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10h50</td>
<td>Resolutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12h15</td>
<td>Close</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Constitutional Amendment**

Conference resolves to amend the Constitution of the Scottish National Party with immediate effect by inserting “members of the National Executive Committee, parliamentarians, councillors and” before “delegates” and “resident or constituted” before “within” in Paragraphs 21.3(b) and 31.6(b).

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

---

**Pension Credits**

Conference condemns the UK Government for making changes to state pensions that could see older couples in Scotland missing out on £7,000 a year from 15 May 2019.

Conference understands the UK Government reforms means that mixed age couples - where one person is of stage pension age and the other is still of working age - will be exempt from claiming Pension Credit and will instead be forced to claim Universal Credit, which is worth less.

Conference notes concerns from Age UK, which has warned that these changes could leave “some of the poorest pensioners paying a hefty price for having a younger partner.”
Conference also notes that these changes come only two months after the Joseph Rowntree Foundation’s UK Poverty 2018 Report, which highlighted that previous falls in pensioner poverty were in part due to the introduction of Pension Credit.

Conference condemns the UK Government for forcing people onto Universal Credit and sees this as another affront to those born in the 1950s who have been affected by the increase in the state pension age.

Conference therefore calls on the UK to reverse these damaging changes.

ALASDAIR ALLAN MSP
LEWIS & HARRIS BRANCH

EU Women, Settled Status and Abusive Relationships

Conference notes reports that EU women could find themselves trapped in abusive relationships after Brexit because of difficulties with providing the evidence needed to grant them settled status.

Conference recognises concerns that women who have suffered domestic violence are at heightened risk of failing to secure their rights because of the way in which the Home Office has chosen to operate this scheme.

Conference acknowledges that by forcing EU citizens and their family members to apply for status – rather than simply conferring status by right – organisations believe women suffering intimate partner violence could be placed in a vulnerable position.

As such, conference calls on the Home Office to work with women’s organisations to explore ways for the settle status application scheme to be made easier for women, particularly those in abusive relationships.

RUTH MAGUIRE MSP
CUNNINGHAME SOUTH BRANCH
04 Protected Geographical Indications

Conference notes the value of EU brand protection for Scottish exports given by Protected Geographical Indication which protects Scottish products from cheap and inferior imitations in the EU and wherever the EU has signed trade deals on our behalf.

Conference is concerned that the UK Government is prepared to cast that protection aside after Brexit by selling it cheaply in trade negotiations, calls on the UK Government to give full and proper reassurances that Scottish products will be protected in any future trade deals ahead of independence.

DEIDRE BROCK MP
EMMA HARPER MSP

05 Impact of Brexit on Scottish Research

Conference notes the global impact of Scottish research and welcomes the report published by the Scottish Science Advisory Council which concluded that Scotland continues to punch above its weight in science and research.

Conference acknowledges the report’s findings that Scottish research is high quality, Scottish researchers are ‘very productive’ and Scotland publishes more papers per researcher than the other UK nations and all other countries in the report.

Conference believes that Scotland’s research has been strengthened by EU citizens working in Scotland and our membership of the European Union and notes with concern that these remarkable achievements come at a time when Brexit means our research base now faces unprecedented risks.

Conference praises the Scottish Government’s ongoing commitment to protecting collaborative research across Europe and its assurance to Scotland’s research institutions that it will remain open and welcoming to European partnership.

RICHARD LOCHHEAD MSP
GEORGE ADAM MSP
School Leavers Toolkits

Conference recognises the work of the Government of New Zealand for their introduction of a School Leavers Toolkit aimed at equipping young people with practical skills for life including courses in financial literacy and budgeting, the provision of employability skills, and information on how to exercise their full civic and democratic rights in order to become fully engaged citizens.

Conference agrees that a similar initiative in Scotland would have benefits for all Scottish school leavers so they can more easily learn the vital life skills necessary to effectively manage their personal lives, develop a career, and play a positive impact in their local communities.

Conference welcomes the Scottish Government’s recently announced PSE mentoring programme and the positive impact this will have on the wellbeing and development of Scotland’s young people.

Conference therefore calls on the Scottish Government to consider the introduction of a School Leavers Toolkit with enhanced financial and civic education for all school leavers. Furthermore conference calls for said toolkit to include enhanced employability training to provide school leavers with the skills to obtain employment or further education resulting in the achievement of a positive destination.
1) Conference notes that Scotland is a prosperous and successful nation, with significant economic assets and advantages, such as our vast natural resources, the skills and education of the people who live here and a range of sectors with existing and potential global competitiveness. Scotland is a rich country with the potential to achieve more.

2) However, Conference also notes that despite these abundant resources, similarly sized independent countries with the ability to tailor economic policy to their own needs have performed significantly better than Scotland.

3) In terms of GDP per head, the median income of the 12 small advanced economies considered by the Sustainable Growth Commission is around 14 per cent higher than Scotland’s - equivalent to £4,100 per person.

4) Conference believes that the example of these similarly sized independent nations illustrates the vast potential for an independent Scotland to develop a stronger and more sustainable economy as the foundation for the fairer and more equal society that we seek.

5) Conference therefore welcomes the publication of the Sustainable Growth Commission’s report “Scotland – the
new case for optimism” which contained 50 recommendations for the future of Scotland’s economy, and thanks the Commission for its work.

6) In particular, Conference considers that an SNP government in an independent Scotland should adopt the Commission’s recommended targets of (a) matching the average growth rate of these other small advanced economies within ten years (or earlier if possible) and (b) closing the gap in GDP per capita with these countries within 25 years (or earlier if possible).

7) Conference also supports the work of the Scottish Government – and a number of other governments internationally – to ensure that the wellbeing of the population is at the heart of our approach to inclusive economic growth, welcomes the decision of the Scottish Government to consider factors other than just GDP, in assessing the performance of the economy and the country, and agrees that the Scottish Government now and with independence should look for further ways to promote wellbeing in its approach to policy development, budgetary decisions and how we measure success.

8) Conference endorses the Commission’s advice that improving economic participation and equality, increasing productivity, and growing Scotland’s working age population must be an independent Scotland’s top economic priorities.

9) Conference welcomes the work already underway by the Scottish Government in these areas – including support for continued migration to Scotland, the development of the Scotland is Now campaign, progress on the Scottish National Investment Bank, the establishment of an Infrastructure Commission, actions to reduce poverty and close the gender pay gap, and increased support for innovation, research and development and exports.

10) Conference also welcomes the Scottish Government’s inclusive approach and the work of the Fair Work Convention and Just Transition Commission, and agrees that future economic policies must be developed in partnership with trade unions, civic society and business.

11) However, Conference believes that without the full powers of an independent country the Scottish Government’s ability to act in these areas will continue to be restricted and the potential of our nation constrained as a result.

12) Conference therefore instructs the National Executive Committee to oversee a programme of work to develop a range of policies – building on those recommended by the Sustainable Growth Commission – that an SNP government in an independent Scotland would pursue to boost population, participation and productivity; and to immediately develop a campaign focused on Scotland’s economic potential as an independent country.

**Sustainable public finances - rejecting austerity**

14) Conference agrees with the Commission that the levels of debt and deficit that an independent Scotland will inherit is a feature of the economic mismanagement of successive Westminster governments and not a reflection of the merits and opportunities of independence.

15) While there are different views on Scotland’s finances to the extent that Scotland, governed by Westminster, has an estimated notional deficit that is higher than comparable countries, Conference believes that this is an argument for change not for the continuation of Westminster governance.

16) Indeed, in light of Brexit, simply continuing as we are is likely to make Scotland’s fiscal position more challenging, not less.

17) Conference endorses the view of the Commission – and indeed of the UK Treasury – that UK debt will remain the responsibility of the UK government and that, by definition, an independent Scotland will start with zero or minimal debt.

18) However, Conference also agrees that an independent Scotland should make a fair and reasonable contribution to the servicing of UK debt. The amount of such a contribution will depend on a fair negotiation of both debt and assets and Conference agrees with the Commission that this would form part of an annual solidarity payment. Conference endorses in principle the Commission’s recommended approach to negotiations.

19) The deficit that an independent Scotland will inherit will be influenced by the outcome of these negotiations and also by specific spending decisions of an independent government – for example, in the case of an SNP government, the decision not to invest in nuclear weapons.

20) Conference endorses the Commission’s recommendation that future revenues from North Sea oil and other windfalls should be invested in a Fund for Future Generations to support intergenerational projects such as the transition to a green economy.

21) Conference welcomes the Commission’s conclusion that the starting deficit of an independent Scotland is manageable and fundable and can be made sustainable. Conference agrees that sustainable public finances and achieving the lowest possible cost of borrowing are important and that an SNP government will seek to maintain debt at sustainable levels and reduce the deficit to sustainable levels as early as is consistent with continuing support for public services, people’s wellbeing and investment.

22) In that regard, Conference notes that the Commission’s projections take no account of the higher growth that the powers of independence will enable Scotland to target, nor of the benefits of Scotland continuing to operate within the EU single market.

23) Indeed, Conference stresses that sustainable public finances fundamentally flow from a healthy, sustainable and fair economy.

24) Fiscal targets must never be an end in themselves and an SNP government will not pursue such targets at the expense of the economy or investment in public services. The UK government has demonstrated in recent years that such an approach is counterproductive and harmful.
25) Conference therefore agrees with the Commission that an austerity or cut approach to deficit reduction should be firmly rejected. At times of lower growth, investment in the economy and public services should take priority over short term targets.

26) Conference also agrees that an economic stimulus at the point of independence should be considered.

27) Conference concludes that the choice facing Scotland is the economic decline of Brexit or taking our economic future into our own hands with independence; and resolves to persuade the people of Scotland that independence offers the best pathway to a more prosperous and sustainable future.

Towards an independent Scottish currency

28) Conference notes that despite significant economic assets, natural advantages and a talented population, independent countries with the ability to tailor economic policy to their own needs have performed better than Scotland.

29) Conference notes that among small, successful independent countries there is no single approach to currency. Conference also notes that the pound sterling is a shared currency across the UK and is available for Scotland to use, just as Ireland did for an extended period.

30) However, Conference believes that it should be the policy of an SNP government in an independent Scotland to establish an independent currency; and agrees that the process and precise timescale for doing so should be subject to robust governance and guided by the six tests recommended by the Sustainable Growth Commission.

31) During the period of transition to independence, work should begin on the establishment of an independent Scottish Central Bank with a Scottish Financial Authority, and the other steps required to support the establishment of a new currency.

32) Until a new currency can be safely and securely established in the interests of the whole economy, the currency of an independent Scotland should continue to be the pound sterling, ensuring continuity and stability for the Scottish people.

33) Conference considers that the independent central bank should report annually to parliament on progress toward meeting the necessary criteria; and that an SNP government should aim to complete the preparations to enable the Scottish Parliament to take a decision on establishing a new currency by the end of the first term of an independent Parliament.

KEITH BROWN MSP, DEPUTE LEADER
DEREK MACKAY MSP
Amendments

AMENDMENT A)
Delete paragraph 18) and replace with:
“However, Conference also agrees that an independent Scotland may make a fair and reasonable contribution to the UK. The amount of such a contribution will depend on a fair negotiation of both debt and assets and Conference agrees with the Commission that this would form part of an annual solidarity payment for a limited term of years. Conference endorses in principle the Commission’s recommended approach to negotiations.”

KIRKCALDY BRANCH

AMENDMENT B)
a) Delete 22) and 23)
b) Delete 30) and replace with:
“Conference believes that achieving successful higher growth and securing a sustainable fiscal balance in an independent Scotland can only be achieved through the establishment of a separate Scottish currency.
Conference believes it should be the policy of an SNP government in an independent Scotland to establish a separate Scottish currency within the lifetime of the first, post-independence parliament.
The pound sterling will remain in use until the currency transition.”

TRADE UNION GROUP
CLYDESDALE CONSTITUENCY ASSOCIATION
WEST FIFE AND COASTAL VILLAGES BRANCH
LAURA BRENNA–WHITEFIELD, ELECTED MEMBER OF NATIONAL COUNCIL
CRAIGENTINNY/DUDDINGSTON BRANCH
THEO FORBES, ELECTED MEMBER OF NATIONAL COUNCIL
HELENSBURGH BRANCH
GREENOCK AND INVERCLYDE CONSTITUENCY BRANCH
RONNIE COWAN MP
AMENDMENT C)
Delete 30) and replace with:
“It is the policy of an SNP government in an independent Scotland to establish an independent currency pegged to the pound sterling; and agrees that the process and precise timescale for unpegging should be subject to robust governance.”
Delete 31) and replace with:
“During the period of transition to independence, work should begin on the establishment of an independent Scottish Central Bank with a Scottish Financial Authority, a new currency pegged to sterling, and the steps required to support in due course unpegging of the new currency.”
Delete 32) and replace with:
“Until the new currency can be safely and securely unpegged in the interests of the whole economy, the currency of an independent Scotland should continue to be pegged to the pound sterling, ensuring continuity and stability for the Scottish people.”
Delete 33) and replace with:
“Conference considers that the independent central bank should report annually to parliament on progress toward unpegging; and that an SNP government should aim to complete the preparations to enable the Scottish Parliament to take a decision on unpegging the new currency by the end of the first term of an independent Parliament.”

MOTHERWELL AND WISHAW CONSTITUENCY BRANCH

AMENDMENT D)
Delete 33) and replace with:
“Conference considers that an SNP Government should take the steps necessary to enable the Scottish Parliament to authorise the preparation of a Scottish Currency as soon as practicable after a vote for Independence with the aim that the currency be ready for introduction as soon as practicable after Independence Day.”

DALKEITH AND DISTRICT BRANCH
Eliminate Single-use Plastics from SNP Campaign Materials

Conference notes that plastic waste is an increasing problem globally and locally. Many plastics are not easily recycled and are finding their way into the environment. Balloons are choking marine mammals, while plastics break up into small pieces which pollute water and food supplies.

The SNP is once again leading the way, for example with the Bottle Return Scheme which is on its way to us across Scotland. Conference recognises that ultimately, the best way to tackle the problem is to reduce consumption of single-use plastics.

Conference therefore proposes that we the SNP will no longer feature any single-use plastic items as promotional or campaign tools either during elections or at other times.

DUMBARTON BRANCH
AMENDMENT

At the end of the resolution, add:

“Furthermore, in adherence to the above, Conference also proposes that all future party Conferences and events should be focussed - where possible - towards ensuring the absolute minimal usage of single-plastic items.

Therefore, in order to set the highest possible example of reducing single-use plastic consumption - organisers of future Conferences and events shall commit to working with venues (and other relevant partners or agencies) prior to the occasion in order to ensure that alternative provisions can be made.”

SOUTHSIDE CENTRAL BRANCH
Conference welcomes the continued support for nuclear disarmament and, with the impending inevitability of independence, we need to set out a clear timetable for removal of nuclear weapons from Scottish soil and waters.

Conference believes that we need a practical description of the process and timescale to safely remove nuclear weapons at the very earliest opportunity on Scotland regaining our independence.

Conference therefore agrees that we should develop a credible road map that has at its end point the removal of the Royal Navy’s nuclear armed and nuclear powered submarine fleets from Scottish soil and the repurposing of related support bases on Scottish soil.

GLASGOW MARYHILL AND SPRINGBURN BRANCH
GLASGOW KELVIN CONSTITUENCY BRANCH

AMENDMENT
Delete paragraph 3 and insert:
“Conference welcomes the long-term future of HMNB Clyde as the main conventional naval base of an independent Scotland.

Conference calls on the Scottish Government to work with the STUC to undertake a diversification study that will set out the positive contribution the
A Citizens’ Assembly

Conference notes that it has always been the core purpose of our Party to return the nation of Scotland to the control of its sovereign people. Recent events on both sides of the Atlantic have highlighted very clearly the frustration voters feel when the political process seems to fail to listen to their concerns.

Conference acknowledges the chaos that has followed from the United Kingdom holding a referendum on leaving the EU without defining a clear prospectus for how that might occur in practice. Triggering Article 50 with no plan was a collective act of folly with little historical precedent. Witnessing two years of the UK government attempting to negotiate a ‘no-plan’ Brexit should be a cautionary tale for centuries to come.

Conference resolves not to make the same mistake with the next Scottish independence referendum. When the sovereign people of Scotland vote in that referendum, there must be a clear prospectus that voters will be making their decision on.

Conference therefore calls on the Scottish Parliament to enact the necessary legislation to conduct a Citizens’ Assembly exercise to listen to the people of Scotland and empower them to create their own vision of the new Nation we will bring into being together.

CHRIS HANLON, ELECTED MEMBER OF NATIONAL COUNCIL
JOANNA CHERRY QC MP
EDINBURGH CENTRAL BRANCH
SIGHTHILL/STENHOUSE BRANCH
United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights

Conference notes with concern the interim findings by Professor Phillip Alston, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, following a fact-finding visit to the UK in November 2018.

Conference believes it is unjust that in a country as rich as the UK, so many people are living in poverty. Conference further believes that this is a political choice, and notes that in his interim findings, Prof Alston described the UK Government’s approach to welfare as “punitive, mean spirited and often callous”.

Conference further notes this is not the first time the UK Government has been criticised by the UN with an inquiry concluding in November 2017 that austerity policies introduced into welfare and social care by the UK government amount to “systematic violations” of the rights of people with disabilities.

In contrast, Conference welcomes the Scottish Government’s strong Human Rights actions and attempts to mitigate the UK Government’s damaging cuts where it can. Conference further notes Scottish Government schemes to address poverty, including the Fairer Scotland Action Plan, the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan, Social Security Agency, that promises to treat everyone with dignity and respect and eschew benefit sanctions.

Conferences echoes concerns from the UN that the UK Government is in state of denial. As such, conference calls for the UK Government to accept the findings of the full UN report when it is published later this year and urgently reassess their approach to welfare and poverty.

SHONA ROBISON MSP
ALISON THEWLISS MP
Conference condemns the UK Secretary of State for Work and Pensions refusal to introduce separate individual payments for Universal Credit claimants, despite concerns about the policy’s impact on victims of domestic abuse.

Conference recognises concerns that given Universal Credit is paid to just one person in a household, it risks giving more power to abusers in households where domestic violence occurs – leaving victims isolated and unable to leave an abusive relationship.

Conference notes that such proposals are supported by a wide range of charities and organisations, including Scottish Women’s Aid, Surviving Economic Abuse and the End Violence Against Women Coalition.

Conference welcomes the Scottish Government’s support for the introduction of separate payments, and calls on the DWP to resolve this flaw and reform the underlying system.

PHILIPPA WHITFORD MP
NEIL GRAY MP

Conference notes how the ongoing debate about Scottish Independence is exposing cracks in the UK’s system of producing official statistics about our economy, which is designed to produce statistics at UK level and not below.

Conference believes that Scotland needs data that better reflects its priorities and needs – so that the Scottish government has the data necessary to make informed policy decisions.

Conference therefore calls on the Scottish Government to commission a working party to consider how an independent Scottish Statistics Agency could help fill these gaps; and enhance Scotland’s capacity to respond to new user and public views of what they want to know.

GREENOCK AND INVERCLYDE CONSTITUENCY BRANCH
STUART MCMILLAN MSP
RONNIE COWAN MP
WESTHILL, KINTORE,
BLACKBURN BRANCH
DALKEITH AND DISTRICT BRANCH
WEST FIFE AND COASTAL VILLAGES BRANCH
CHRIS HANLON, ELECTED MEMBER OF NATIONAL COUNCIL
DUMBARTON BRANCH
ARDROSSAN BRANCH
GARNOCK VALLEY BRANCH
Menopause and the Workplace

Conference believes that while the menopause can have a direct impact on women in the workplace, many are left to cope on their own, without support or understanding from colleagues or managers.

Conference notes that an STUC survey found that nearly a third of respondents said menopause was treated negatively in the workplace, with nearly two thirds saying it was treated as a “joke”.

Conference believes that it is time we break the taboo around discussing the menopause at work, and help ensure women are treated with dignity and respect in their working environment.

Conference therefore proposes that the Scottish Government works closely with stakeholders to develop a set of best-practice, guiding principles for employers which take account of menopause-related health issues. This will enable employers to ensure that necessary adjustments are in place to support those experiencing menopause.

CAMBUSLANG BRANCH
Fairness for the Gig Economy Workers

Conference notes that the changing nature of work in the so-called ‘gig economy’ presents both challenges to industrial relations and threats to rights won by and for working people.

Conference recognises that many employees enjoy the flexibility granted by the self-employed status, but re-affirms the principle that this status should not lead to withdrawal or lessening of legal rights won by trade unions and workers, and enshrined in legislation. Legislative action is now necessary to correct the imbalance of power between employer and employee in this sector.

Conference calls for the UK government to devolve all employment law to the Scottish Parliament immediately.

Conference also calls on the Scottish government to examine practices in the gig economy, so that if the powers are granted, they can ensure that each man and woman in that sector is offered the same rights to holiday entitlement, to working hours, to sickness benefits and to minimum pay as those afforded to people in more traditional sectors of the economy.

GLASGOW MARYHILL AND SPRINGBURN BRANCH

EU Structural Funds

Conference notes the future of EU Structural Funds programme has not been guaranteed by the UK government; commends the EU programmes which have provided Scotland with nearly £1 billion between 2014 and 2020 and allowed the Scottish Government to directly tackle key issues such as improving infrastructure and addressing unemployment across Scotland; is dismayed that details of vital future funding is yet to come to fruition; is appalled by signs the UK Government plans replace the system with a centralised Whitehall system in yet another example of its power-grab agenda; and calls on the UK government to urgently outline details for a replacement of the EU Structural Funds programmes that respect Scotland’s devolution settlement.

INVERNESS CITY BRANCH
DREW HENDRY MP
BRENDAN O’HARA MP
KATE FORBES MSP
MAREE TODD MSP
GAIL ROSS MSP
ANGUS BRENDA MACNEIL MP
BADENOCH & STRATHSPEY BRANCH
GRANTOWN ON SPEY BRANCH
LOCH NESS BRANCH
THURSO & DISTRICT BRANCH
DINGWALL AND BLACK ISLE BRANCH
EIS Fringe Meeting
Sunday 28th April 2019

Empowered Schools
An exploration of the Empowered School model and how it could deliver improved pupil outcomes and greater teacher agency.
Speakers from the EIS and the SNP will provide their perspectives.

**Venue:** Carrick, Level +1, EICC  
**Time:** 12.45pm - 13:45pm  
**Speakers:** Larry Flanagan (EIS General Secretary), Alison Thornton (EIS President - chair), John Swinney MSP (Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills)

Catering will be provided